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More FBI-CIA questions

Who killed King?

By JOHN COOK

The big question being asked in the wake of disclosures of CIA murder plots and FBI disruption programs is: "And what else did they do?"

Additional Senate hearings on intelligence agency activities are scheduled and already the calls for reopening the investigations of the assassinations of Martin Luther King and John and Robert Kennedy are being raised with increased intensity.

"I have always felt there was more to it than came out," Coretta King, widow of Martin Luther King, said after hearing about the FBI's massive campaign against her husband. "I don't have the facts, but at this stage I say it appears there was a conspiracy in the death of my husband."

New evidence presented at the Senate hearings on the FBI document the agency's campaign to slander and vilify King because he was believed to be a "threat" to the government. King was under heavy FBI surveillance when he was killed in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968 and the FBI had tried to persuade him to commit suicide in an anonymous letter.

"These revelations confirm and give credence to our belief that the FBI and CIA were involved in the assassination of Dr. King, John and Robert Kennedy and Malcolm X," Jesse Jackson of Operation PUSH in Chicago said.

James Earl Ray, who pleaded guilty to the murder, has asked for a new trial in the case because he claims he is a "fall guy" and was browbeaten into accepting sole responsibility for the killing.

During a demonstration in front of the White House last week, Ralph Abernathy and Hosea Williams of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and comedian Dick Gregory issued a call for a new investigation into King's death. The FBI conducted an investigation into the assassination and concluded that Ray acted alone and was not part of a conspiracy to kill King.

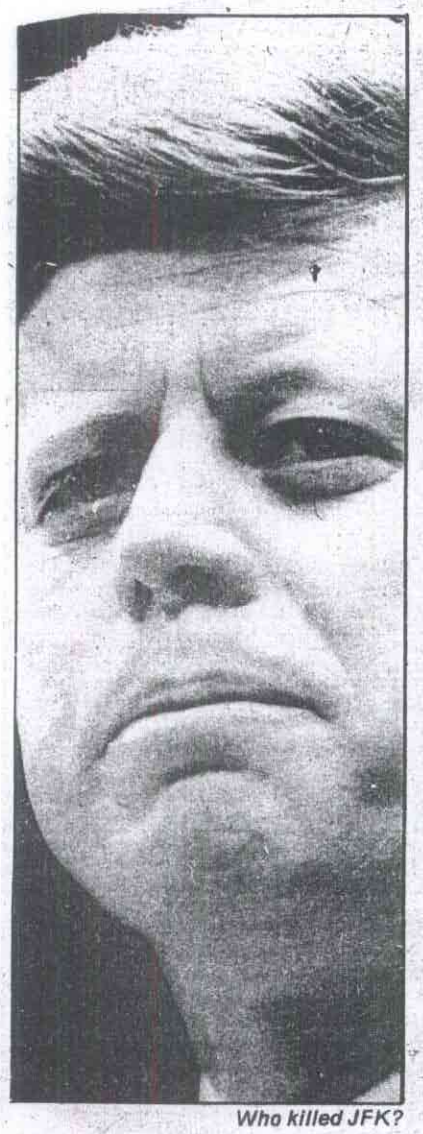
Responding to the growing pressure to bring out the truth of the King killing, Attorney General Edward Levi said he would order a "review" of the FBI investigation to determine whether it should be reopened. President Ford also stated that he felt the agents involved in the anti-King effort should be identified.

The FBI conducted at least 25 separate attempts to discredit King, one of which, in effect at the time of his death, is viewed as a possible set-up for his murder.

King was staying in Memphis to build support for the striking sanitation workers and the FBI, through a press campaign, was instrumental in causing him to move from the white-owned Holiday Inn to the Black-owned Lorraine Hotel, where he was shot.

Two important witnesses have been identified as having information on the King assassination. Robert Warren, now serving

Comedian Dick Gregory, civil rights leaders Ralph Abernathy and Marion Brown demand reopening of King assassination probe.



Who killed JFK?

a prison term in Kentucky, has told authorities he overheard conversations in which a plot to kill King was discussed. The other, Clifford Andrews, was serving a prison sentence in Toronto, Canada, but was released recently and his whereabouts are not known.

FBI COLLUSION WITH KLAN

The Senate hearing has also revealed that while the FBI was waging war against the Black liberation movement, it was helping to instigate violent attacks on Black people by the racist Ku Klux Klan.

A former FBI agent who joined the Klan at the FBI's request in the mid-1960s testified that on several occasions he supplied advance warning of plans by the KKK to attack civil rights marches but the FBI did nothing to head them off. In one such incident, a Freedom Rider's trip through Alabama was greeted in Birmingham by a mob of Klansmen armed with clubs and chains and the protesters were badly beaten. The former agent said the police had agreed to wait 15 minutes before arriving on the scene and, when they did, they too attacked the civil rights demonstrators and allowed the Klan members to escape.

The former agent, Gary Rowe, said he had told the FBI officials this would happen but all the FBI did was send several agents to observe the brutal attack.

Rowe's testimony is a significant setback to the FBI's contention that it had dealt "evenly" with both left and right organizations in carrying out the Cointelpro operations.

The primary burden of the blame is being placed on former FBI director J. Edgar Hoover and several of his close aides who are now either dead or no longer in the bureau. The current FBI director, Clarence Kelley, said that those responsible for the disruption campaigns should be "disciplined" but maintained "there is no indication that any who participated knew or even thought that it was illegal to do these things."

Rowe said he also can supply additional information on the FBI campaign against King and will identify FBI agents who took part in the actions. He said many of them are still working for the FBI.

In testimony before the House Subcommittee on Government

Information and Individual Rights—which is also conducting inquiries into the harassment of Martin Luther King—Hoover's secretary for 50 years, Helen Gandy, said she had destroyed reams of files compiled by Hoover during his reign as head of the bureau. Gandy said Hoover's long-time companion Clyde Tolson, who was acting director for a few days after Hoover died, also destroyed some of the mass of files and the rest were ordered destroyed by L. Patrick Gray, the next acting director. Gray played an active role in the Watergate coverup and was not confirmed as FBI director by the Senate.

Gandy claimed all the files she destroyed were personal correspondence from friends and had no bearing on FBI business. Her remarks were contradicted by former Assistant Director William Sullivan, fired in 1970 by Hoover, who said the files "were just loaded" and were "a bucket of worms."

Meanwhile, the Senate report on CIA assassination plots has raised new questions about the Warren Commission report on the assassination of President John Kennedy.

David Belin, former counsel to the Warren Commission and executive director of the Rockefeller Commission investigating the CIA, has used information in the report to espouse his theory that Cuban Premier Fidel Castro was involved in the Kennedy murder. His statements come at a time when progressive forces have raised substantial questions about possible CIA and FBI involvement in the Kennedy killing. Belin, who is thought to be trying to divert these questions in order to continue the Warren Commission coverup, said recently that a new inquiry would "greatly contribute toward the rebirth of confidence and trust in government."

President Ford, who also served on the Warren Commission, felt compelled to respond to the increasing calls to reopen the investigation and said a probe limited to "some new developments, not evidence, but developments," should be started.

"It is just to lay those charges [of a coverup] aside that a new investigation ought to be undertaken," Ford said.

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, which released the assassination report, is currently negotiating with former President Richard Nixon to question him about his role in the Cointelpro scheme, the U.S. role in overthrowing Chilean President Salvador Allende and other topics. Nixon has demanded that only the two ranking members of the committee question him at his San Clemente estate, that a time limit of four hours be set and that he may refuse to answer any questions. The committee does not appear to be willing to accept his offer.

The committee is also pushing to question Secretary of State Henry Kissinger publicly about his role in the 1970 CIA actions against the Allende regime. Kissinger had claimed in his confirmation hearings that he played no role in planning the actions but subsequent hearings have shown that he lied.

Kissinger recently made a strong appeal for continued secrecy about CIA intervention in the affairs of other countries. "We cannot allow the intelligence services to be dismantled," he said in a Detroit speech. To eliminate covert operations in other countries, he said, would pose "a grave risk to our national security."

The Senate Intelligence Committee is scheduled to hold additional hearings on the FBI programs aimed at harassing and disrupting the New Left and will wrap up its investigation with a report due in February.